

SETTING GOALS IN OUR GARDENS

Workshop Step-by-Step | Winter 2016

Follow along with this Workshop Step-by-Step to create a clear set of goals and objectives for our community garden this season and discover ways to measure our progress together.

The Challenges We Face Together

Step One

Take a moment on your own to **reflect** on the challenges we face as individuals, as a neighborhood, as a city, or as a society. **Name** at least two challenges or problems you aim to change through community gardening. **Write** each of your answers on a sticky note and **post** them for others to read.

Step Two

Review everyone's responses and **group** similar ideas together by moving sticky notes on the wall. **Discuss** similarities and differences as a whole group and **find consensus** on the main problems we aim to work toward solving through gardening together.

Our Vision for the Future

Step One

Take a moment on your own to **imagine** the ideal future that results from our work as community gardeners. What do you see? What do you hear and smell and taste? What do you feel—with your hands and with your heart? What has changed in ourselves, our neighborhood, or our world as a result of the work we do as community gardeners? **Name** at least two positive changes and **write** each of your answers on a sticky note. Post them for others to read.

Step Two

Review everyone's responses and **group** similar ideas together by moving sticky notes on the wall. **Discuss** similarities and differences as a whole group and **find consensus** on the main ideas we aim to achieve through gardening together.

Our Gardening Practices—What Do We Do to Make Our Vision a Reality?

Step One

Take a moment on your own to **name** all of the different activities that happen in our garden. Be thorough! Consider everything that takes human effort to get done, from growing vegetables to weeding paths to keeping open hours for the public. **Write** each idea on a sticky note and **post** them for others to read.



Step Two

Read the activities that others posted and **group** similar ideas together by moving sticky notes on the wall. **Discuss** the inventory of activities and **decide** whether the list is complete OR whether more activities need to be added to capture all of the kinds of work that happen in the garden.

Our Measures of Success

How can we measure whether we're making our vision a reality? The Farming Concrete Toolkit offers twenty fun and easy ways to measure the good things happening in our garden.

Step One

Review a chart of all the Farming Concrete measurement methods and **circle** all of the methods that connect with our gardening practices. For example, the *Harvest Count* method connects with vegetable growing in most community gardens.

Step Two

As a whole group, **discuss** everything you circled and **choose** the methods we will use to measure the good things that result from our gardening practices this season. Ask a facilitator to **write** each choice on a sticky note and **post** it for all to see.

Our Objectives for the Season

At this point we have:

1. named the challenges we see around us and our vision of a better future;
2. named all the work we do in our garden to make that vision of the future a reality; and
3. chosen some methods for measuring the good things we do in our garden.

Now we need to set some solid numbers for our objectives. How many pounds of food will we grow? How many hours will visitors donate to working in the garden?

Step One

Review our list of activities in the garden and the methods we chose to use from the Farming Concrete Toolkit. As a group, **discuss** and **choose** the number we will work to achieve on each measure. For example, if we are growing vegetables and we choose to use the *Harvest Count* to measure how much we grow, *exactly how many pounds do we want to grow this season?*

Step Two

Ask a facilitator to **write** each objective on a sticky note and **post** it for all to see.



Bringing It All Together

As a whole group, review all of the ideas you've generated. **Discuss** the following questions to connect everything together and add, subtract, or change ideas as needed:

1. Do our gardening practices match the problems we identified at the start of the workshop?
2. Will the objectives we defined for each of our practices help to bring about our vision for change in the future?



Facilitator Notes: Getting Ready for the Meeting

Background

The “Setting Goals in Our Garden” workshop step-by-step is designed to pair with the Farming Concrete toolkit for measuring the impacts and outcomes of community gardening. The Toolkit is available for free download at www.farmingconcrete.org/toolkit.

Timing

Schedule approximately 60 to 90 minutes for this workshop. If you have a large garden with many people participating in the brainstorming process, you may find you need more time to let more voices be heard.

Location

Choose a comfortable place indoors or outdoors with at least one wall or bulletin board where you can clearly post sticky notes and signs for all to see. Arrange chairs in a circle or in small groups to facilitate discussion.

Process

Follow along with the step-by-step on pages 1 through 3. Invite participants to read out different instructions to keep the process lively and engaging.

Materials

Buy an inexpensive package of sticky notes and a cheap box of markers for all to share. Choose quantity over quality—you don’t want people to feel as if they can’t share all their ideas on paper. Print some copies of the chart on page 5 for “**Our Measures of Success**” on page 2.

Before the workshop, write each of the following phrases on a single sheet of paper:

1. The Challenges We Face Together
2. Our Vision of the Future
3. Our Gardening Practices
4. Our Measures for Success
5. Our Objectives for the Season

Use big and colorful markers to make the words stand out on each sheet of paper. Tape the five sheets of paper to a blank wall face down (so the words are not visible) using the following sequence:

1. The Challenges We Face Together	3. Our Gardening Practices	4. Our Measures for Success	5. Our Objectives for the Season	2. Our Vision of the Future
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As you move through each step, flip each sheet of paper and invite participants to post their sticky notes underneath the appropriate category.



TOOLKIT METHODS	EXAMPLES OF RELATED GARDEN PRACTICES
Crop Count, Harvest Count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing fruits and vegetables
Landfill Waste Diversion by Weight or Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental education • Farm management training • Seed saving • Reusing garden equipment and trash
Compost Production by Weight or Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composting with worms or tea • Bin or pit composting
Rainwater Harvesting by Surface Area or Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting or harvesting rainwater • Reusing rainwater, e.g. irrigation
Participation by Geography, Task, or Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea sharing, e.g. compost training • Volunteer programs • After-school programs • Community events, e.g. harvest events
Skills & Knowledge in the Garden and Sharing with Other Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job training and skill development, e.g. internal farm/garden workshops
Reach of Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea sharing, e.g. compost training • Volunteer programs • After-school programs • Community events, e.g. harvest events
Changes in Attitude: Yum & Yuck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce taste sampling for children • Healthy eating program
Good Moods in the Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building spaces for social interaction • Community events
Healthy Eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking classes • Produce nutrition facts, recipe cards
Beauty of the Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden beautification, e.g. flower planting, creating peaceful spaces
Market Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA or farmer's market sales • Restaurant sales • Direct produce sales
Donations of Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations of produce

